

A  
Salute to  
Rhode Island  
Independent  
Women

0871

*A Presentation by*  
**THE PERMANENT ADVISORY  
COMMISSION ON  
WOMEN IN RHODE ISLAND**



**AND**  
**THE COALITION FOR  
RHODE ISLAND WOMEN'S YEAR**

*made possible through  
a grant provided by the*

**RHODE ISLAND COMMITTEE  
FOR THE HUMANITIES**

**THE**  
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## *Rhode Island Independent Women*

Rhode Island women have always been in the avant garde of this century's women's movement. They flapped in the Newport of the 1920's; they tended the hotbed of social protest in the Woonsocket of the 1930's; they built the ships that won the war in the Providence of the 1940's. In the 1950's and early 1960's, they participated in the move to suburbs and prosperity as residents of a state which has more educational institutions per square mile than any other state in the Union.

Now, in the 1970's, Rhode Island women are reacting with courage and strength to the reorganization of the state's economic structure. College degrees or not, working, non-working, artists, government workers, humanists all, these women are more confident about Rhode Island's future than the country's most optimistic offshore drilling concern, Mayor Cianci and the Narragansett Brewery put together.

1975, International Women's Year, saw the independent women of one of the country's historically most independent states gain some of the recognition they have so long deserved. This publication is to honor Rhode Island's outstanding women and to present their examples as role models to encourage all women to achieve success in all fields.

## *Rhode Island's International Women's Year*

During International Women's Year the Advisory Commission on Women in Rhode Island and the Coalition for Rhode Island Women's Year named 27 Women of the Year. Recognition of accomplishment was based on four criteria: excellence in her field, uniqueness of her job, recognition of effort and long term involvement and service in a job not traditionally filled by women. Nomination was a public process, with the names of more than 250 outstanding Rhode Island women being submitted for consideration. An 11 person committee, composed of people with expertise in a variety of fields, had the responsibility of final review and selection. In July through December of 1975, banquets were held to honor the recipients in each of the six fields of public and private achievement. January 1976 witnessed the finale of Women's Year activities. Each of the women was awarded a citation from the Permanent Advisory Commission on Women in Rhode Island at an affair that was actually the final celebration for International Women's Year and the kickoff of International Women's Decade, 1976-1985.

## *Women in Government*

### **Municipal Government**

#### **ANNE ARCHIBALD**

Anne Archibald has been recognized for her achievement in Cranston City Planning. Hired in early 1974, as a Planning Aide, she was instrumental in developing the Cranston Flood Plain Ordinance. She was a major contributor and author of sections of Cranston's Comprehensive Master Plan, 1975, and she is currently working on an Impact Study for the State Institution housed in Cranston. As a result of her efficiency and wide range of performance, her department head suggested that she become a "Junior Planner," a more descriptive title of Ms. Archibald's contribution than Planning Aide. Her dedication to her profession is illustrated by her continuing study in graduate planning and her volunteering for additional assignments beyond the scope of her job description. She has outside interests as well and has assumed the position of Girl Scout Leader in her new community.

## ***Women in Government (Cont.)***

### **Federal Government**

#### **JUANITA HANDY**

Juanita Handy has been recognized for her achievements as a Supervisory Social Worker in the Veteran's Administration Hospital. She began at the hospital as a research social worker and advanced to status as Acting Chief. In addition, she has served as instructor of the social work trainees placed at the V.A. facility through Boston College and Boston University Graduate Schools of Social Work. She also assumed the responsibility of chairing the EEO Committee while carrying out these duties. She has remained a highly respected, approachable, and dedicated worker—offering counseling and referrals to help others advance themselves. She is well-known in her community, serves on numerous boards, including those of the Urban League and People's Bank, and has held other statewide appointments.

## ***Women in Government (Cont.)***

### **State Government**

#### **FLORENCE KERINS MURRAY**

Florence Kerins Murray has been cited for her contribution in the fields of law, public service, and women. She has had a remarkably broad range of experience, and achieved accomplishments that qualify as unique for a woman in many areas. Her abilities have enabled her to rise to the highest level. She served in the U.S. Army in W.W. II where she attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. She was a Senator in the Rhode Island General Assembly for 8 years. Currently she is serving as Associate Justice of Rhode Island Superior Court, the first woman ever to have been so appointed. Judge Murray is a former chairman of the Newport School Committee and the current chairman of the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities. She holds many other state and national positions on boards and commissions, including the American Bar Association.

## ***Women in Social and Civic Affairs***

### **Religion**

#### **DR. ROSE BUTLER BROWNE**

Dr. Rose Butler Browne was cited for her contribution to religion which has brought her into international prominence. She is currently the President of the Women's Auxiliary of the National Progressive Baptist Convention. In 1975 she was appointed the U.S. delegate to the Baptist World Alliance in Stockholm. These honors come after 40 years of ministering to youth. At seventy-nine she is still providing inspiration to many in her position as Director of the Board of Christian Education for the Olney Street Baptist Church in Providence. She is the author of an autobiography, *Love My Children*, which deals with the years she spent teaching. This work has been translated into French to be used in Southeast Asia, African Countries, and the Caribbean. She has instilled in countless lives the high Christian standards and ideals which have for so long guided and sustained her own life.

## ***Women in Social and Civic Affairs (Cont.)***

### **Religion**

#### **MADELINE CHAFEE CLARK**

Madeline Chafee Clark of Cranston has been honored for her achievement in religion. Perhaps most notably, she was the first woman to become president of the Rhode Island State Council of Churches. This was the culmination of many years of church work with the Rhode Island American Baptist Churches, the State Council of Churches and the Greater Rhode Island YWCA, where she was Public Relations Director until her retirement in 1973. She has a teaching degree and experience in speech and dramatics. Ms. Clark has authored plays and poems for children and was editor of the *Cranston Herald* for ten years. She is currently the commentator of a weekly church news broadcast on WPRO which covers national, state and local material. She is past president of both the Cranston and Rhode Island Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs.

## ***Women in Social and Civic Affairs (Cont.)***

### **Social Action**

#### **SISTER MARY KARIN**

Sister Mary Karin, R.S.M. (nee Agnes Sandwell) has been honored as the outstanding Rhode Island woman in Social Action for her achievements in counseling alcoholics and their families. A parochial school teacher for 26 years, Sister Mary Karin now counsels fulltime at the Pawtucket Half Way House for alcoholics. She also works with Al-Anon and established the Pawtucket Alateen Group, the first such unit in the state. Sister Mary Karin works through classrooms, civic groups, and colleges in her effort to educate youth and the general public to the dangers of alcoholism. The significance of the services offered by Sister Mary Karin becomes apparent when one considers there is an estimated total of 45,000 alcoholics statewide. Programs geared to their needs and the particular ones of their families require compassion and understanding in their execution. Sister Mary Karin possesses these qualities in the highest degree.

## ***Women in Social and Civic Affairs (Cont.)***

### **Volunteerism**

#### **CAROLE OLSHANSKY**

Carole Olshansky has been honored for her volunteer work which has resulted in the establishment of the Greater Providence Epilepsy Association, Inc. She was presented Citations by the Rhode Island House of Representatives and by Lieutenant Governor Garrahy for the work she has done for the state's 20,000 epileptics. She was appointed to the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities for 1971 and reappointed for 1975. Ms. Olshansky was one of the organizers of the Rhode Island Alliance Coalition for persons with handicaps. Nationally, her work has been recognized with a Certificate of Merit from the National Epilepsy Foundation of America in 1973 and again in 1974 when she won the National Epilepsy Achievement Award for her outstanding contribution as a community leader. Her efforts have been tremendously successful because of her own investments of patience and perseverance.



## ***Women in Social and Civic Affairs (Cont.)***

### **Politics**

#### **SENATOR LILA SAPINSLEY**

Senator Lila Sapinsley has been recognized for her outstanding political achievements. Senator Sapinsley is the state's highest ranking woman office holder and the first woman to chair the Board of Trustees of State Colleges, a position she held prior to serving in the General Assembly in 1972. Concerned with health needs, she serves on the boards of Butler Hospital, Miriam Hospital, the Metropolitan Health and Nursing Services of R.I. and the Hospital Association. Concerned as well with the problems of the elderly and with the need for quality day care, she serves on the Board of Trustees of the Fox Point Senior Citizens and has worked to establish both the John Hope Settlement and Brown-Fox Point Day Care Centers. She has also developed programs to encourage Black and disadvantaged students to enter higher education. It is clear she is unquestionably committed to improving the quality of life and expanding opportunities for all Rhode Islanders.

## ***Homemakers and Family***

### **Homemaker**

#### **MARY JONES**

Mary Jones has been cited for her excellent work as homemaker and mother. As a single parent, she has instilled in her five children values that will guide them in becoming educated and responsible citizens. Ms. Jones works at the Smith Hill Branch of the Providence Public Library and is a leader in many community organizations. She helped organize the library's Child Learning Center and helped with its Project Single Parent, a program to identify needs and develop resources for single parents. She is chairwoman of the Camden Avenue Council and the Smith Hill Health Center. She is also an ordained elder and trustee in the United Presbyterian Church. Along with all of her activities, she keeps a close watch on the whereabouts of her children and her love and concern for them are reflected in their fine personal development.

## ***Homemakers and Family (Cont.)***

### **Foster Parent**

#### **FRANCES MABRY**

Frances Mabry has been recognized for her work as a foster parent. She has performed successfully and lovingly the duties required of both mother and father for her 3 foster children, two blood-sisters and one boy. One child, who has been with Ms. Mabry since six months of age, is now thirteen years old. The children visit their own parents periodically but prefer Ms. Mabry's hospitality. They are always glad to return to their foster home after visits. Ms. Mabry is presently an assistant cook at Roger Williams Day Care Center. She is a Providence resident, and the state is proud of her accomplishments. As a foster-parent she attends all her children's needs and provides an excellent home. Her commendation is very well deserved.

## ***Homemakers and Family (Cont.)***

### **Work with the Elderly**

#### **BLANCHE MCGRAW**

Blanche McGraw has been cited for her service to the elderly. As a neighborhood worker for Social Services to the Elderly and Disabled, she has served all types of clients, often giving of her own time and performing services above and beyond those that were required. Not only is she involved in visiting, meal preparation, check cashing, and acting as a liaison between the social worker and the client, she has even washed floors and bathed clients who had no one to help them. Her work is worthy of the highest recognition and reflects the dedication and determination she had to develop in supporting, raising and educating her own four children. She has shown outstanding ability in overcoming personal adversity and going beyond this to help others. Ms. McGraw is a warm, sensitive person who has been able to develop lasting and meaningful relationships with the clients she serves.

## ***Homemakers and Family (Cont.)***

### **Home Aide**

#### **SARAH NELLIS**

Sarah Nellis, a Rhode Island resident for over fifty years, has been recognized for her long career as a home aide. She has devoted her life to helping others, even while raising her own family. Thirteen years ago she began working for Family Service, Inc. as a homemaker and for the last three years she has worked in the same capacity for Homemaker-Home Health Aide Services. She provides such in-home health care for elderly and sick people as bed baths, light housekeeping, shopping, and meal preparation. She is always pleasant and is adaptable to every situation. She is flexible and non-judgmental, empathetic, and willing to enter any environment. Ms. Nellis has worked in homes where the physical conditions are less than desirable with a dignity and presence that made the clients comfortable, at ease, and willing to learn how to improve their environment.

## ***Women in Business and Industry***

### **Business**

#### **KATHLEEN BREEN**

Kathleen Breen has been recognized for her achievement in business. She has been with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Rhode Island for over 30 years and she is currently the Director of the Enrollment Department, the first of her sex to attain this status, where she supervises thirteen subordinates. In this job, not traditionally filled by women, she employs extremely effective human relations and management skills. Last year she was honored at the Blue Cross Association Board of Governor's Annual meeting for her special contribution to the organization. The Rhode Island Senate passed a resolution commending her for her service to Blue Cross subscribers. Ms. Breen is a member and former secretary of the Women's Advertising Club and a member of the Sales and Marketing Executives Club.

## ***Women in Business and Industry (Cont.)***

### **Labor**

#### **IRMA KRASNER**

Irma Krasner has been recognized for her contribution to the field of Labor. She has held many union offices and in 1969 she was elected to the office of Local Union President of the Warwick School Employees, and she has been re-elected each year. In 1971, she became a member of the Rhode Island State AFL-CIO Executive Board, to which position she has been twice re-elected. In 1974, the R.I. Public Employee Council 70, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO elected Ms. Krasner president of its membership of 7,000—consisting of 35 local unions. She was the first woman ever to be elected to this office. Clearly she has made strong contributions to labor and the people of Rhode Island have indicated this through their recognition and support.

## ***Women in Business and Industry (Cont.)***

### **Profession**

#### **GLORIA LINCOURT**

Gloria Lincourt is cited for her outstanding achievement in her profession. She first joined Old Colony Cooperative Bank at the age of 16 and took advantage of every opportunity to educate and advance herself. She joined People's Bank as an Assistant Secretary in the Mortgage Department in 1966. In 1971, after graduating from the Brown University School of Savings Banking with high honors, she entered the Marketing Department. She is presently the Marketing Director at People's Bank where she is responsible for all marketing, advertising, sales training and public relations activities. Ms. Lincourt is very active in diverse business and community organizations. Among her activities are included the Vice Presidency of the Executive Committee of the United Arts Fund and the 1975 Chairwomanship of the Business and Industry Committee of the United Way.

## ***Women in Communications and the Arts***

### **Performing Arts**

#### **BILLIE ANN BURRILL**

Billie Ann Burrill has been recognized for excellence and long term support of the performing arts in Rhode Island. She is nationally known for her work in lighting design for dance and is currently working in that area with the Rhode Island College Dance Company. A professor at Rhode Island College, Ms. Burrill has served for nine years as concert manager for the College's Fine Arts Series. The Federal and State grants she received have enriched the series. The wide range of excellent artists booked shows her appreciation of all forms of performing arts. Her accomplishments in both lighting design and concert management have had a statewide impact on arts. In concert management, a field traditionally dominated by men, she has demonstrated her sense of aesthetics, her business acumen, and her dedication to the arts.

## ***Women in Communications and the Arts (Cont.)***

### **Radio**

#### **EDITH COOLIDGE HART**

Edith Coolidge Hart of Providence was cited for her contribution to the field of radio. In 1920 she began her career as the first woman radio announcer in the United States. Prior to that, she was a newspaper reporter, reviewer, and drama critic for the *Fall River Daily Herald*. A public school teacher of English and French for twenty years, Ms. Hart is currently a teacher at the Central Congregational Church Center for Lifetime Learning. At age 85 she is still working as an essayist, public speaker, and reviewer of plays in Rhode Island and Boston. She found time to raise a family while continuing her involvement in her varied fields of interest. Ms. Hart is a unique woman and to be highly commended on her work in radio and newspaper reporting begun over fifty years ago.

## ***Women in Communications and the Arts (Cont.)***

### **Journalism**

#### **CATHERINE HILL STEWART**

Catherine Hill Stewart has been recognized for her excellent work in the field of Journalism. She has over 35 years of newspaper experience. For the last 14 years she has been the editor of the *Barrington Times*, which has gained recognition as one of the leading weekly periodicals in the northeast. She is the President of the New England Press Association and winner of the New England Newspapers Award for Community Service for 1975. As a reporter Ms. Stewart approaches in a deft manner delicate situations and secures newsworthy information without being abrasive to persons interviewed in even the most controversial matters. She is an astute artisan in investigatory matters which deeply concern the public, and through her efforts has increased awareness of issues vital to the community. Many Rhode Island groups have recognized Ms. Stewart's singular abilities.

## ***Women in Communications and the Arts (Cont.)***

### **Arts**

#### **JUDITH SZARAMA**

Judith Szarama has been cited for her contribution to the field of art. She is the Director of Exhibitions at the Woods-Gerry Gallery of Rhode Island School of Design where she coordinated faculty and student shows and invitational exhibitions. She is an artist whose fine sense of graphics has won her much recognition. Last year she had a one woman show of drawings and prints at the Woods-Gerry Gallery. Her work has been included in shows throughout the country and often singled out for special praise. Previously an instructor of art at RISD, Ms. Szarama was named an Outstanding Educator in National Awards of America in 1975. Her vision and determination combine to create masterful works of art.

## ***Women in Communications and the Arts (Cont.)***

### **Communications**

#### **JEAN WHIPPLE**

Jean Whipple of Providence has been recognized for her contribution to the field of communications and advertising. She is the president and owner of Jean Whipple Associates, Inc., an advertising/public relations firm that is uniquely staffed—entirely by women. The firm offers an educational program for college credit which provides women with firsthand business experience in the field. She is one of the founders of the Women's Political Caucus and has been Chairwoman of Candidates and Campaigns since that time. She is currently co-chairwoman of the Publicity Committee for the National Women's Political Committee of the Bi-Centennial Commission. Ms. Whipple is also on the Board of Directors of the Better Business Bureau and Handgun Alert, as well as being one of the founders of the latter.

## ***Women in Communications and the Arts (Cont.)***

### **Television**

#### **SARA WYE**

Sara Wye has been cited for her contribution to the field of television journalism, where she has been a newsreporter and anchorman with WJAR-TV. Ms. Wye joined the station in 1971 as a reporter and assumed anchoring responsibilities in 1973. She anchors both the Newswatch at Noon Monday through Friday and the Sunday Night Newswatch program. Her interviewing technique and extraordinary grasp of public affairs have earned her the position of regular moderator of the weekly "10 News Conference." In 1975, Ms. Wye, because of her outstanding abilities, was chosen to conduct a half-hour interview program with President Ford. She continues to devote some of her time to reporting and last year researched and anchored a 90 minute special "How to Survive Unemployment." Her reputation as a tough but fair reporter and a skilled, incisive interviewer is the result of consistently superior effort.

## *Women in Health and Education*

### **Teacher**

#### **MARIE BUGIELSKI**

Marie Bugielski is cited for her singular achievement as teacher and Chairman of the Consumer and Homemaking Education Department at Nathaniel Greene Middle School. She has innovated many unique and successful programs, including a restaurant run by students, workshops in her field, special inter-departmental projects, and Bi-Centennial programs. By continually improving and revising her department she has made it a model for other school systems in the state. Her ability and achievements have won her recognition from the R.I. Board of Regents for Education. She remains a devoted teacher who continues to value her classroom contact with students. As a result of her dedication, she has received the affection and admiration of those she has taught.

## *Women in Health and Education (Cont.)*

### **Public Health Nurse — Health**

#### **MARY DONNELLY**

Mary Shaw Donnelly has been a Public Health Nurse on Block Island for 18 Years. For three extended periods and many short ones, the Islanders have been without a doctor and dependent on Mrs. Donnelly's skills and devotion. This mother of 7 has willingly answered every call on the Island for nursing help and her community recognized her efforts by declaring May 20, 1973 "Mary Donnelly Day". This nursing practitioner's judgment and keen powers of observation have been called into action on many occasions. She has met all challenges with professionalism, skill and efficiency. The Islanders have learned to love and respect her for her kindness and untiring effort. She is a superior nurse and the state has been enriched by her presence.



## *Women in Health and Education (Cont.)*

### **Administration**

#### **GRACE GLYNN**

Grace Glynn, a lifelong Rhode Island resident, has been cited for her over 30 years' work in education administration. From the Chief of the Division of Adult Education, Ms. Glynn went on to be the Associate Commissioner and, more recently, the Assistant Commissioner of Education in Rhode Island. She is one of only a handful of women in the United States to have reached this elevated position. Her national recognition extends beyond this, for she has always made her contribution to public affairs. Among her other honors was her selection by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to serve on the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services. She is currently active with the Butler Bradley Mental Health Education Committee and various other professional organizations. Her total commitment to her work has brought honor, not only to herself, but to the whole state of Rhode Island.

## *Women in Health and Education (Cont.)*

### **Education**

#### **EDNA RUTH MacDONALD**

Edna Ruth MacDonald has been recognized for her contribution to education as both teacher and high school counselor. As Hope High School's first counselor, she wrote and published a handbook on the concepts and structure of high school counseling which was used in the Providence School System for many years. A graduate of Brown University in 1919, Ms. MacDonald broke ground in a field new to men and women alike. She has a long history of participation in civil rights and social action groups. A member of the Urban League for 20 years, Ms. MacDonald has also worked with such varied boards as the Governor's Commission on Civil Rights, the Nursing Council of Rhode Island, and Common Cause. In her long career she has contributed in many ways to humanitarian ideas through her many and varied interests.

## *Women in Health and Education (Cont.)*

### **Continuing Education**

#### **RAE K. O'NEILL**

Rae K. O'Neill has been recognized for her contribution to Continuing Education in Rhode Island. She developed the University of Rhode Island's Continuing Education for Women Program into the current Adult Daytime Degree Program where 1400 male and female students pursue baccalaureate degrees. Before taking over the program, she taught education at both U.R.I. and Salve Regina College. Ms. O'Neill has worked untiringly on numerous organizations and commissions. In 1975 she was appointed by the Governor to the Permanent Day Care Commission and named Chairwoman of the Women's Committee on the Rhode Island Bi-Centennial Commission. She is the founder and President of Women Educators, which is dedicated to helping women move up to administrative and managerial positions in Education. Her expertise causes her to be in demand as an outstandingly qualified speaker before educational and professional groups.

## *Women in Health and Education (Cont.)*

### **Mental Health**

#### **DR. WILMA ROSEN**

Dr. Wilma Rosen has been recognized throughout Rhode Island for her outstanding work in Mental Health. First woman president of the Butler Hospital Staff Association, she is also currently Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Brown University and Psychiatric Consultant at Brown and Rhode Island School of Design. She has always given generously of her time, bringing the public to awareness in the areas of her special expertise, such as: problems of women, human sexuality, problems of adolescence, and psychiatry. In the past she has been associated with the Vista Training Program and Psychotherapy at the Rhode Island Medical Center. She has always proven an effective and dedicated teacher and clinician and the Rhode Island community is grateful for the benefit it has derived from her services.

## ***Special Recognition at IWY Finale***

### **DR. GERALDINE COX**

Dr. Geraldine Cox has been recognized for her accomplishments which brought her to national prominence when she was named one of the ten "Outstanding Young Women of America." She is currently the Technical Coordinator of Environmental Programs for Raytheon Oceanographic and Environmental Services. Before joining Raytheon, Dr. Cox taught at the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel Institute of Technology. Holder of a Professional Chemist rating from the American Institute of Chemists, she is an officer of many environmentally-oriented organizations. She has published numerous articles in the area of marine pollution and pollution instrumentation. Her biography appears in *American Men and Women of Science* and *Who's Who in Ecology*. Dr. Cox is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and National Executive Vice President of Alpha Sigma Alpha social sorority. She is currently a National Finalist for the 1976-1977 White House Fellowships. On entering and conquering a highly technical field, Dr. Cox has won the awe and admiration of women and men on the local, state and national level.

## ***Special Recognition***

### **"IN THE MEDIA"**

"Excellence in Newspaper Coverage" — TED HOLMBERG, Editor/Publisher Pawtuxet Valley Times.

"Excellence in Television" — EDWIN W. PHEIFFER, Vice President, WPRI-TV Channel 12.

"Excellence in General Radio Coverage" — GLORIA ISABELLA DUCHARME, WRIB.

"Excellence in Public Service" — PATRICIA GRANDE, WERI.

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